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2013

Discouraging ROK Development of Nuclear Weapons

Center on Contemporary Conflict

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

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**The Project on
Advanced Systems and
Concepts for
Countering WMD**

(PASCC) is run at the Center on Contemporary Studies (CCC) and sponsored by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. PASCC awards and supports strategic studies and dialogues that anticipate and try to reduce the threat of WMD capabilities.



The CCC has a respected track record for providing research and timely analysis on a variety of topics to leading decision makers in the U.S. national security community. Located in the Naval Postgraduate School, the CCC is the research wing of the Department of National Security Affairs.

Research in Progress describes ongoing PASCC research. For more information, please contact pascc@nps.edu.

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Discouraging ROK Development of Nuclear Weapons

Performer: RAND

Principal Investigator: Bruce Bennett

Cost: \$160,000

Fiscal Year(s): 2013-2014

Objective:

Ironically, the greatest likelihood for nuclear proliferation in the coming years may come from U.S. allies. The development of nuclear weapons by South Korea (ROK) could result in a regional nuclear arms race and global failure of the Nonproliferation Treaty. As North Korean development of nuclear weapons continues irrespective of the U.S. security umbrella, fewer external options remain to ensure ROK security.

To assist both the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the larger U.S. national security community, the project will develop a framework for discouraging ROK development of its own nuclear weapons by meeting ROK security needs. RAND's framework will seek to explain how ROK possession of nuclear weapons will undermine national security, jeopardize the U.S.-ROK alliance, and damage international security.

Approach:

The project will identify contexts where the ROK might reasonably consider employment of nuclear weapons, assess the extent to which the ROK would be better served by possession of nuclear weapons, and analyze the potential side effects of the alternate means for the ROK to secure nuclear weapon support. Deliverables include multiple Pentagon briefings and a final report.